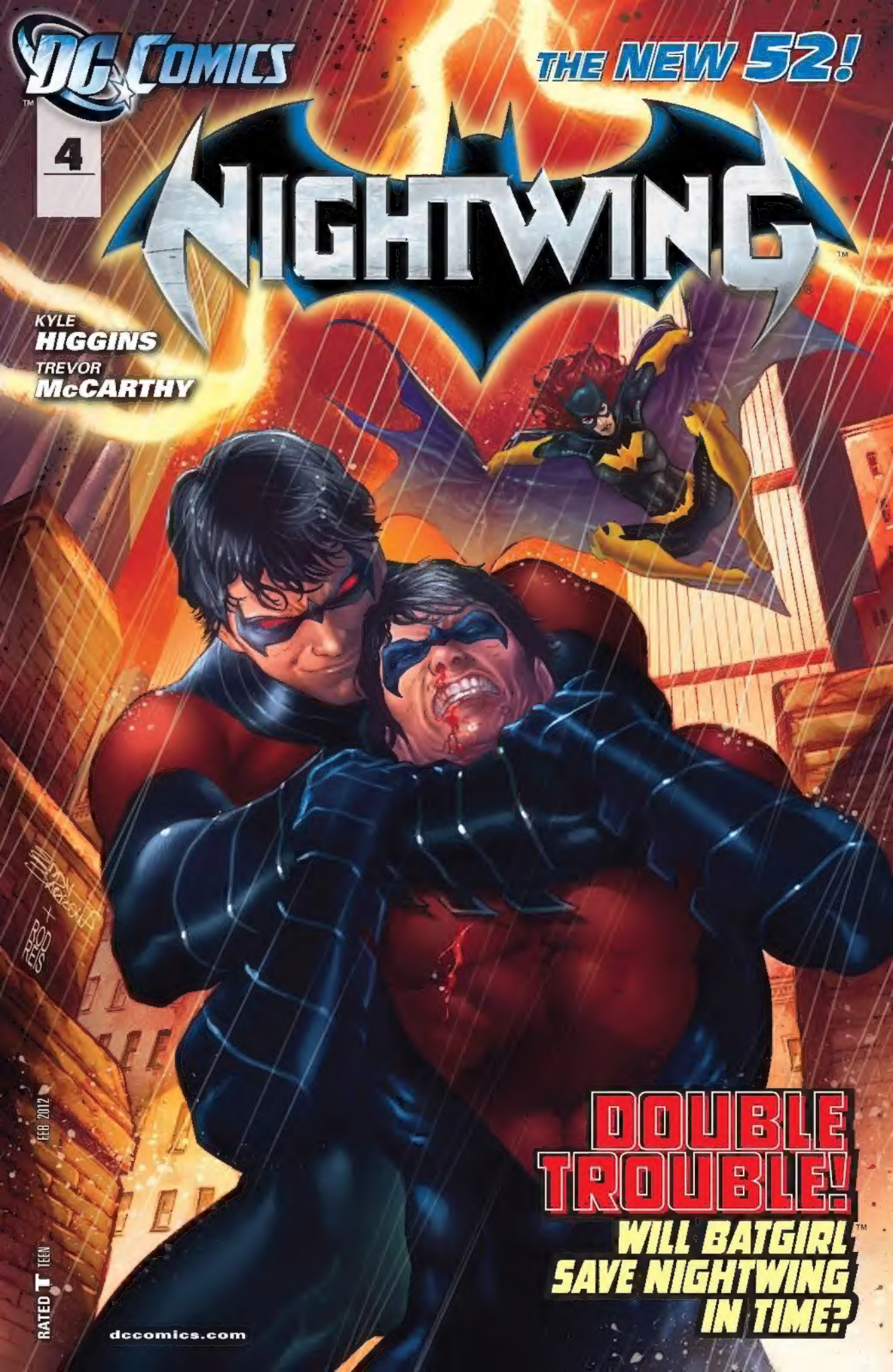
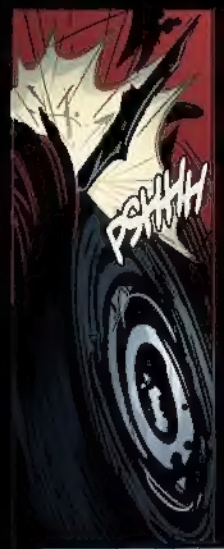

DC COMICS
THE NEW 52!
4
NIGHTWING
KYLE HIGGINS
TREVOR McCARTHY
DOUBLE TROUBLE!
WILL BATGIRL SAVE NIGHTWING IN TIME?
FEB 2012
RATED T TEEN
dccomics.com

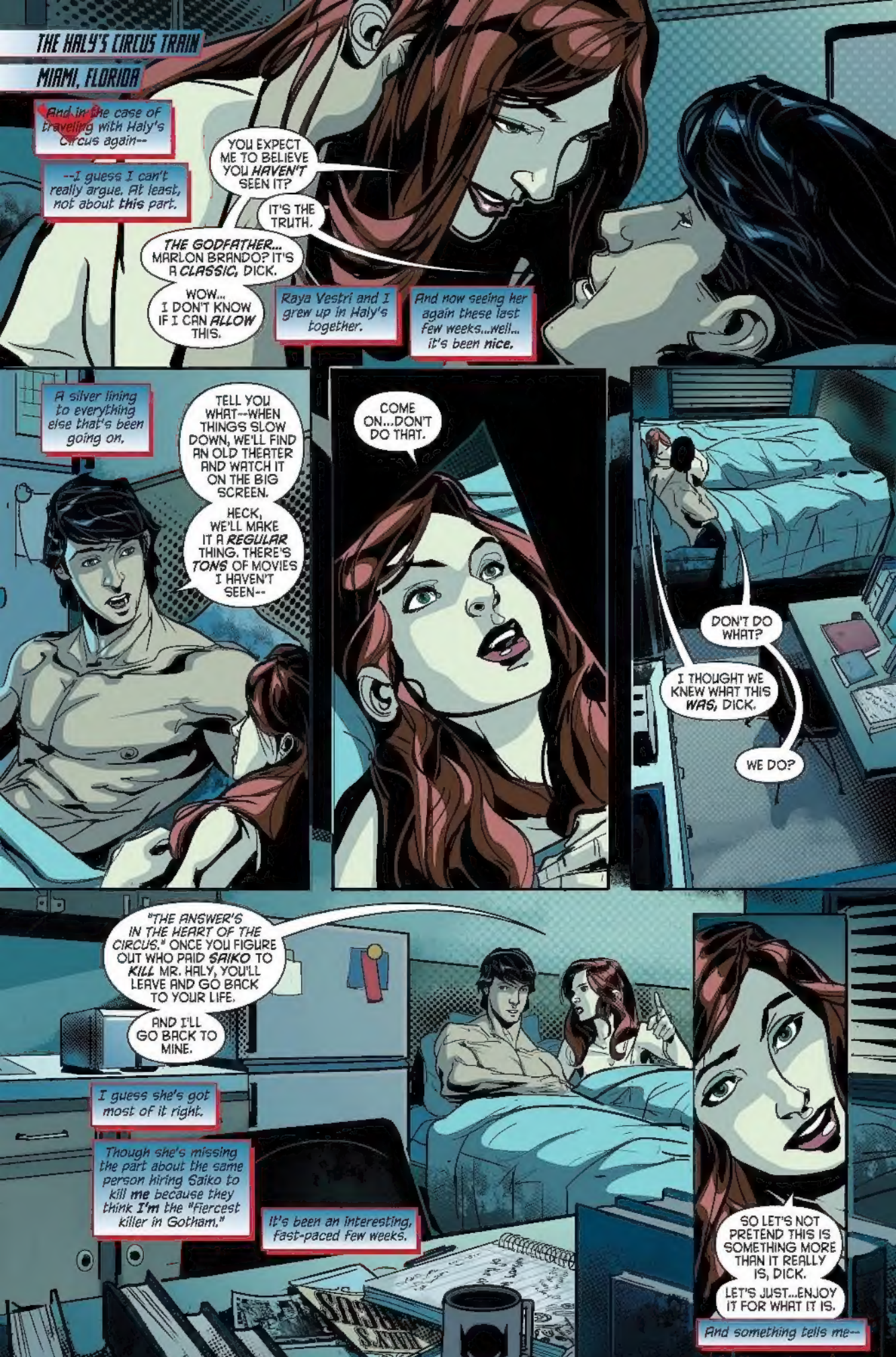
GOTHAM CITY, TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AGO
Writer: Kyle Higgins
SCREEECH
Artist: Trevor McCarthy
KABOOM
Colors: Guy Major
Letters: Wes Abbott
VROOOOOM

Cover: Barrows & Reis
Asst. Editor: Katie Kubert
Editor: Bobbie Chase
Nightwing created by
Marv Wolfman and George Perez

After witnessing the deaths of his parents as a boy, Dick Grayson was taken under Batman's wing, becoming Robin, the Boy Wonder. But when the Boy Wonder became a man, he shed the identity of Robin and branded himself as NIGHTWING

SOUTH BEACH CONNECTION




THE HALY'S CIRCUS TRAIN
MIAMI, FLORIDA
And in the case of traveling with Haly's Circus again--
--I guess I can't really argue. At least, not about this part.
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IT?
IT'S THE TRUTH.
THE GODFATHER... MARLON BRANDO? IT'S A CLASSIC, DICK.
WOW... I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN ALLOW THIS.
Raya Vestri and I grew up in Haly's together.
And now seeing her again these last few weeks...well... it's been nice.
A silver lining to everything else that's been going on.
TELL YOU WHAT--WHEN THINGS SLOW DOWN, WE'LL FIND AN OLD THEATER AND WATCH IT ON THE BIG SCREEN.
HECK, WE'LL MAKE IT A REGULAR THING. THERE'S TONS OF MOVIES I HAVEN'T SEEN--
COME ON...DON'T DO THAT.
DON'T DO WHAT?
I THOUGHT WE KNEW WHAT THIS WAS, DICK.
WE DO?
"THE ANSWER'S IN THE HEART OF THE CIRCUS." ONCE YOU FIGURE OUT WHO PAID SAIKO TO KILL MR. HALY, YOU'LL LEAVE AND GO BACK TO YOUR LIFE.
AND I'LL GO BACK TO MINE.
I guess she's got most of it right.
Though she's missing the part about the same person hiring Saiko to kill me because they think I'm the "fiercest killer in Gotham."
It's been an interesting, fast-paced few weeks.
SO LET'S NOT PRETEND THIS IS SOMETHING MORE THAN IT REALLY IS, DICK.
LET'S JUST...ENJOY IT FOR WHAT IT IS.
And something tells me--

--It's not going to slow down any time soon.
CIRCUS
WHATCHYA GOT THERE, JIMMY?
WARNIN
THREA
A DEAL
NOTHIN'... NOTHIN' AT ALL...
YOU SURE?
MIND YOUR OWN DAMN BUSINESS, MARC.
HEY, GUYS--
--EITHER OF YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND DICK GRAYSON?
TRY THE TRAIN.
GREAT. THANKS.
HMM... WELL, THE GUY CERTAINLY HAS A TYPE...

SO WHAT'S THE REST OF YOUR DAY LIKE? DOES "ENJOYING IT FOR WHAT IT IS" MEAN WE CAN'T HAVE DINNER?
IT DOES IF YOU PICK SOMEPLACE TERRIBLE.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
ONE SEC...
...OH, MAN...
OKAY...NOT QUITE WHAT I WAS EXPECTING.
I FIGURED I'D AT LEAST GET A "WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, BABS?"
BUT I GUESS BEGGARS CAN'T BE--
OH. WOW. SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
OH. IT'S FINE. I WAS JUST LEAVING.
UH, BARBARA, RAYA...RAYA, THIS IS BARBARA GORDON. SHE'S A FRIEND...FROM BACK IN GOTHAM.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
YOU, TOO.
CAME DOWN FOR THE WEEKEND TO GET AWAY FROM THE SNOW...JUST THOUGHT I'D STOP AND SAY HI.

WELL... ENJOY YOUR VISIT.
SO I'LL, UH... CALL YOU LATER, RAYA? ABOUT DINNER?
ACTUALLY, I THINK ANOTHER DAY MIGHT BE BETTER--REHEARSAL IS GOING TO BE LONG.
OH, UH... OKAY...
SO... THAT...?
WASN'T GREAT TIMING.
WHO IS SHE?
LOOK, BARBARA...
SORRY. NONE OF MY BUSINESS...
..."ANSWER'S IN THE HEART OF THE CIRCUS..." ANSWER TO WHAT?
SO ABOUT THAT WHOLE "WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, BABS"...
IT'S A CASE I'M WORKING--THE FENCE IS HERE IN MIAMI.
SO YOU DECIDED TO JUST...COME SAY HI...
...AFTER YOU MADE IT CLEAR YOU WANTED TO DO THIS ALONE?
LOOK, RICHARD...I FEEL BAD HOW WE LEFT THINGS.*
I THOUGHT MAYBE...WE COULD TRY THIS AGAIN?
I'VE KIND OF GOT A LOT ON MY PLATE, BARBARA.
COME ON... TAKE ONE NIGHT TO CLEAR YOUR HEAD.
I'LL EVEN LET YOU SWING FIRST.
*SEE BATGIRL #3 -- BOBBIE
Considering I've spent years trying to be my own person...

...it's amazing what I let myself get talked into.
But then again, Babs and I have always had an...interesting relationship.
She's the daughter of Commissioner Gordon, the survivor of a brutal attack by the Joker, a hero when she's in her Batgirl guise...
...and someone I've cared about deeply.
If Raya is the first girl I ever crushed on, Barbara is a close second. And I'm pretty sure she's got the same feelings for me.
Except the last time we saw each other, I basically told her I didn't think she was ready to be Batgirl again. She didn't take it well.
But regardless, we've always had a connection...a synergy. Which makes her being here now...

...that much more complicated.
SO THE THIEF'S A SHAPE-SHIFTER?
NEW GUY, NAMED SPINEBENDER.
NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
THAT'S 'CAUSE HE'S NEW.
AND WHAT'D HE STEAL?
TWO DOZEN MICROCHIPS FROM Q-CORE'S FACILITY IN GOTHAM.
HOTEL SUNSPIRE
AND WE'RE OUTSIDE A FLASHY HOTEL NOW BECAUSE--
BECAUSE THE LOVELY BUYERS LIKE LOVELY ROOMS.
AND THEY ARE?
THAT'S "ASIMOV," A CUSTOM WEAPONS MANUFACTURER FOR SOME OF GOTHAM'S MORE COLORFUL--AND UNLAWFUL--RESIDENTS.
THE MICROCHIPS SPINEBENDER STOLE ARE ACTUALLY THE CLOSEST THING ON THE MARKET--
--TO WHAT WE USE FOR OUR GEAR.
I KNEW ASIMOV WAS MAKING A DEAL FOR THEM BEFORE I EVEN KNEW ABOUT SPINEBENDER.
SO YOU WANNA WAIT FOR SPINEBENDER TO SHOW UP--
AND RECOVER SAID CHIPS BEFORE ANYTHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS, YEAH.
YOU'LL BE BACK AT THE BIG TOP IN A FEW HOURS. EASY.
RIGHT...
...EASY.

THREE HOURS LATER
OKAY...MAYBE MY TIMELINE WAS A LITTLE RUSHED.
YOU THINK?
SO...ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN YOUR "SAIKO MYSTERY"?
I'VE RATTLED A FEW CAGES, BUT I HAVEN'T FOUND ANYBODY THE GUY'S WORKED FOR.
AND NOW WITH HIM KNOWING THAT I'M NIGHTWING--
I'M SORRY, HE KNOWS WHAT?! HOW?
HE...TORTURED IT OUT OF MR. HALY.
BUT THAT MEANS--
HE COULD FIGURE OUT WHO YOU ARE...WHO RED ROBIN AND ROBIN ARE...WHO BATMAN IS. I KNOW.
LIKE I SAID-- I'VE GOT A LOT ON MY PLATE.
WHAT ABOUT RAYA?
WHAT ABOUT HER?
COME ON... I'M TAKING AN INTEREST IN YOUR LOVE-LIFE. YOU KNOW--FRIEND STUFF. WHAT'S SHE LIKE?
SHE'S... NICE.
WELL, I'D HOPE THE GIRL YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH IS "NICE."
WHAT ELSE YOU GOT ON HER?
-SIGH- I'M GOING TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK. COVER ME?
UH, YEAH... SURE.

So much for clearing my head.
Come on, Spinebender...show yourself so we can wrap this up before I have to get my own reality show.
Two G'ris, a Guy, and a Circus Tent.
A guy who can look like anyone, who can lose a tail like it's nothing, is late to his own fence. Doesn't add up.
Unless...
...he knows he's not the one being tailed.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID THIS "MAN" WAS PUNCTUAL?
S'POSED TO BE.
THEN WHERE IS HE?
So the delay's a surprise to Asimov, too. Huh.

ANYTHING?
NOPE.
SO LISTEN, ABOUT WHAT I SAID...
OOF!
WHOA!
BATGIRL, HIT HIM!
HUH...?
SWISH SWISH
ARGH!
WHAAMP

WOOP!
YOU'RE GETTING IN THE WAY AGAIN, LITTLE GIRL...
...AND I HATE PATTERNS.
THEN HERE--
--LET'S CHANGE THINGS UP.
UGHN!
Bought us a few seconds...
...but also tipped off Asimov's men.
I guess it's lucky for me--
THUD

--I don't have to deal with Asimov's goons and Spinebender at the same time.
Teamwork--it's a nice change.
BEHIND YOU!
I KNOW!
STAY DOWN! DON'T--
ARGH!
BAM
Squeezing...air out...have to...
SWAP AGAIN?
CATCH!

SPLASH
ARRH!
So water doesn't have much of an effect on him. But I wonder if he holds up as well to--
THERE WE GO! HE DOESN'T LIKE ELECTRICITY!
HIT HIM W TH SOMETHING BIGGER!
Ahh... it's no wonder he doesn't like electrical current.
Hope this works...
DEET
COME ON, SPINEBENDER-- DIDN'T YOUR MOTHER EVER TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MAKE FACES?

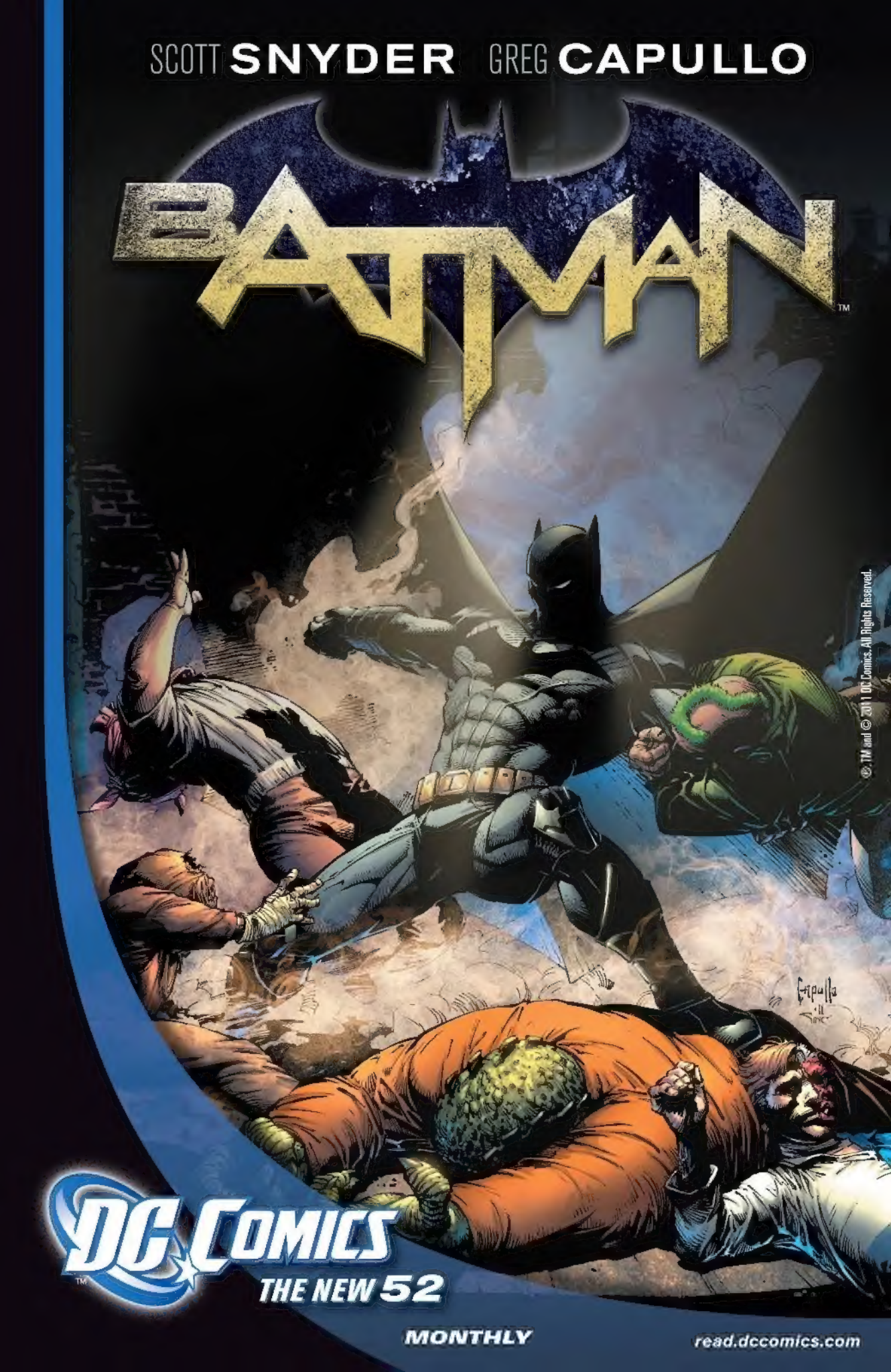
ARGHHH!
SLLLLT
WHAT D D-- WHAT DID YOU--
I'M--I'M GLASS!
NOOOO...
...OOOOOOO!
POLICE! NOBODY MOVE!
WHAT DO YOU 'S GOING TO EN TO HIM?"

WELL, ALL HIS VITALS WERE STILL STRONG--HE'S *ALIVE*. MAYBE SOMEBODY IN S.T.A.R. LABS CAN FIX HIM UP.
HOW ABOUT THE MICROCHIPS?
THEY WERE FRIED WHEN YOU HIT HIM WITH THE TASER. HE HAD THEM ON HIM THE WHOLE TIME.
YOU KNOW, SOMETHING I WAS WONDERING--WHEN THERE WERE TWO OF ME, HOW'D YOU KNOW WHICH ONE TO HIT WITH THE BATARANG?
I DIDN'T. I JUST WENT AFTER THE CUTER ONE.
HAR HAR.
HEY, SOMETIMES IT'S JUST A MATTER OF LOOKING AT THINGS FROM THE RIGHT ANGLE TO HAVE THEM MAKE SENSE. YOU'D BE SURPRISED AT WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND.
YEAH...I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
WHICH, UH, REMINDS ME...
...I'M SORRY I PRIED BEFORE--IT REALLY *IS* NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
AND YOU SEEM *HAPPY*, SO...
THANKS. THAT MEANS A LOT. AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, SO DO YOU.
SO THEN I'LL SEE YOU BACK IN GOTHAM SOMETIME...

...FORMER BOY WONDER."
AYSON
SO...
...YOU GUYS MUST BE PRETTY CLOSE, HUH?
YEAH. I GUESS YOU COULD SAY WE GREW UP TOGETHER.
FUNNY-- I COULD SAY THE SAME THING.
GRAYSON
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO CAUSE PROBLEMS, RAYA. DICK IS A CLOSE FRIEND.
IS THAT ALL?
LISTEN, HE'D PROBABLY KILL ME FOR SAYING THIS...
...BUT HE REALLY CARES ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW. YOU MAKE HIM HAPPY.
AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, ISN'T THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING?
GOOD LUCK, RAYA...
JON
"...HE'S A REALLY GREAT GUY."
GRAYSON

The last time Barbara and I saw each other wasn't nearly as pleasant.
It's funny what a change of scenery can do.
I guess it really is like Babs said--
--sometimes you just have to look at things from the right angle in order for them to make...
...sense?
For the last few weeks, I've been thinking about Mr. Haly's final words as a metaphor.
But what if he meant an actual place?
After all, if you're going to hide something in a traveling circus...
...you hide it in a spot that will always be there.
Like the heart of it.

It takes an hour to spot the panel, but when I do it's clear as day. It has more wear and tear than the others--
--like it's been pried and hammered into place hundreds of times.
Like it's holding something important.
The book is filled with names...
William Cobb
Benjamin Baldman
...none of which I recognize.
Alexander Staunton
Henry Ballard
That is, until I get to the last one.
And just like that...
...I'm looking for a new "angle" all over again.
Richard Grayson
NEXT: New Orleans & a VOODOO DEMON!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